

Latin America and the Caribbean



The Latin America and Caribbean region is renowned for its incredible biodiversity. In this part of the Western Hemisphere, an amazing assortment of unique cultures live in dramatic landscapes that range from tropical rainforests to arid deserts, and from island paradises to snowy mountaintops. These habitats are also home to an array of wildlife including tapirs, jaguars, macaws, manatees, giant anteaters, and countless other species. The broad diversity of wild places and creatures makes Latin America and the

Caribbean one of the most environmentally important regions on the planet.

Unfortunately, the landscapes and wildlife of Latin America and the Caribbean are exposed to a number of serious threats. The region's growing population and widespread poverty have led to increased demand for already limited natural resources such as land, food, and water. Additionally, recurring natural disasters place still more stress on these delicate ecosystems.

Wide-ranging environmental issues are not constrained by national borders, and neither are their solutions – addressing

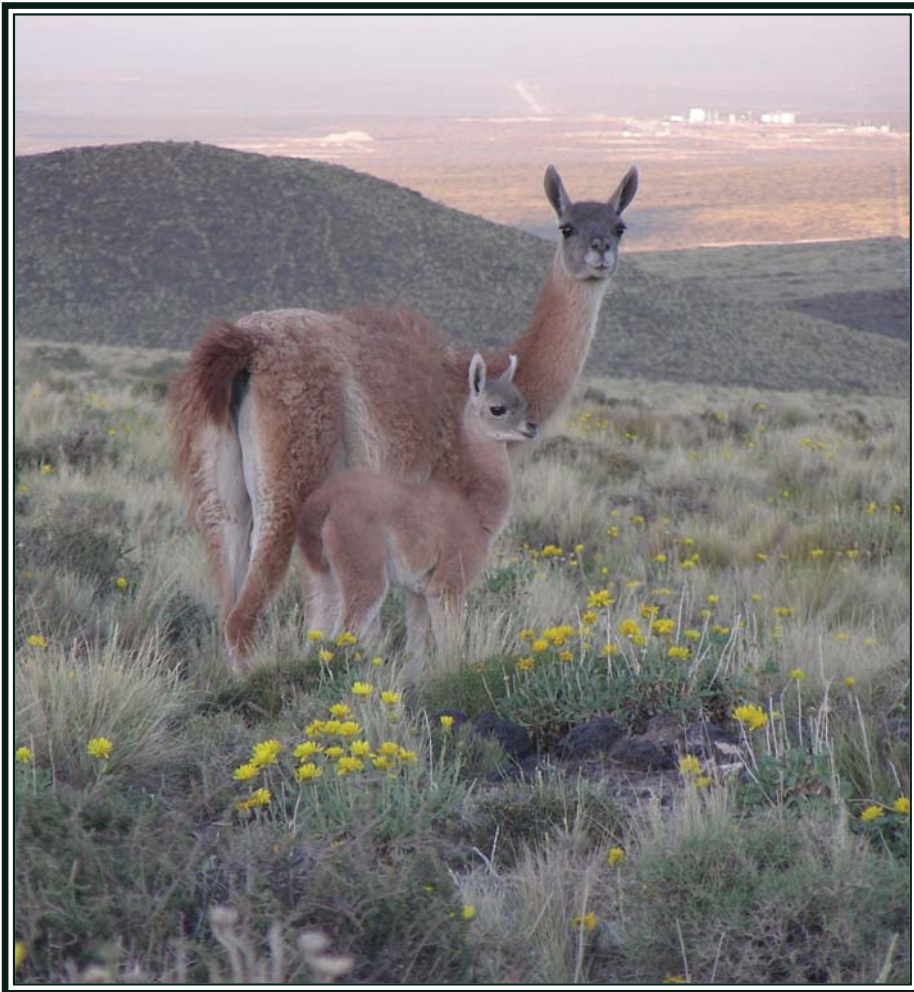
these problems requires both an international and interdisciplinary effort. The Wildlife Without Borders Program for Latin America and the Caribbean (WWB-LAC) builds on the region's single most valuable natural resource: people. Over the past 30 years, the program has provided invaluable support to the region's emerging efforts to conserve and manage biodiversity. By supporting human and institutional capacity building in protected areas and buffer zones, the program strengthens the ability of local people and organizations to manage and conserve species, habitats, and ecological processes.

Through collaboration with non-governmental organizations, research centers, communities, and other groups, the program facilitates the protection of these areas as effectively managed landscapes.

The WWB-LAC Program focuses on projects benefitting high priority ecosystems associated with flagship, endangered, or migratory species of regional concern. Signature program initiatives involve the delivery of high-quality conservation training to key audiences associated with protected areas in the region. These audiences include land managers, park guards and administrators, outreach and education specialists, local community leaders, graduate students, and other stakeholders who influence protected areas.

By informing, training, and empowering new generations of conservation leaders, the WWB-LAC program helps the region's conservation community protect biodiversity for generations to come.

*Guanacos (*Lama guanicoe*) in Argentina.*
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The Wildlife Without Borders – Latin America & the Caribbean program has supported conservation projects since 1990. In 2009 the program leveraged over \$2.3 million and funded over \$1.1 million towards 32 projects in 14 countries throughout the region. Projects include:

- Providing long term support to the innovative Master's Degree Programs in Wildlife Management offered by universities in Argentina, Costa Rica, and Brazil. These programs use a highly applied and interdisciplinary approach to train regional specialists in wildlife management and conservation.
- Establishing a participatory bird biodiversity monitoring program in Costa Rica that aims to ensure connectivity between national parks and reserves within the Volcan Central Talamanca biological corridor, a major coffee producing area. In partnership with CATIE, Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center.
- In-service training for park guards and administrators in over 23 countries through a regionally recognized training center at Ría Celestun in Mexico. In partnership with **Ducks Unlimited of Mexico, the Autonomous University of Yucatán, and the U.S. Forest Service.**
- Encouraging active participation from Maya-Q'eqchi' indigenous communities in Guatemala in the implementation of a subsistence hunting management system to promote viable conservation approaches for the protection of Laguna Lachúa National Park's biodiversity and local peoples' livelihoods. **In partnership with Organización Nacional para la Conservación y el Ambiente (the National Organization for Conservation and the Environment or ONCA).**
- Building capacity for protected area and conservation management on Ometepe Island, Nicaragua, including training programs at Maderas Volcano Natural Reserve and Concepcion Volcano Natural Reserve to enhance enforcement, monitoring, and outreach capacities of park rangers and local tourist guides. In partnership with **Flora and Fauna International.**
- Improving the conservation status of the Andean tapir in Ecuador—the most endangered large mammal throughout the Andes region—by funding a training symposium for key stakeholders to highlight its potential for economic benefit from eco-tourism. In partnership with **Finding Species.**



Top: A scarlet macaw chick (*Ara macao*) will be released into the protected forests of the Mayan Biosphere Reserve.

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Bottom: The endangered Andean tapir (*Tapirus pinchaque*).

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Latin America & the Caribbean Program Funding History 2005 to 2009

Total Number of Grants Awarded	155
Total Funds Distributed Through Grants	\$3,740,735
Total Partner Contributions Leveraged by Grants	\$11,440,235
Total Number of Countries that Received Program Support	14



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